

The Urban District Council of Caterham.

REPORT OF THE MEDICAL OFFICER OF HEALTH.

THE PRIORY,
CATERHAM VALLEY,
February, 1912.

*To the Chairman and Members of the Urban District Council
of Caterham.*

GENTLEMEN,

As Medical Officer of Health I have the honour to present you with my Annual Report for the year 1911 for the District over which you preside :—

Area, Statistics and Population.

The area comprises 2,438 acres, with a population of :—

Caterham (estimated)	...	7,779
Asylum (actual)	...	2,036
Barracks (actual)	...	1,060
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Total	...	10,875

The estimated population in previous years was considerably over the census returns which proved to be 10,841 giving an estimated population to the middle of 1911, i.e., one quarter more than the census returns, the above figures. You will see that the population of the Asylum and Barracks are actual.

During the year there has been 209 births and 84 deaths belonging to the District, giving respectively a birth-rate of 19·2 and a death-rate of 7·7 per 1,000 of the population. In estimating the death-rate the population and death-rate of the Asylum have been excluded. Again the District is to be congratulated on its low death-rate.

There have been 19 deaths of infants, i.e., children under 1 year of age. An analysis of these deaths is as follows :—Five have been certified as being due to premature

birth or congenital malformations, two to whooping cough, one to congenital syphilis, one to over-lying, one to pneumonia, and ten to infantile or epidemic diarrhoea, the later disease being extremely prevalent during the unusually hot and dry weather of last summer. In connection with the epidemic of infantile diarrhoea, whenever cases came to my knowledge and where possible personal visits were made and instructions given to those in charge of infants on the necessity of absolute cleanliness in dealing with the milk and food of young children, and pointing out the part which flies and dust played in the contamination and infection of food. Circulars on infant feeding and emphasising the above points were also circulated. Steps were also taken by the Sanitary Inspector to prevent the accumulation of refuse in or near dwelling houses.

The Notification of Births Act, 1907, has not been adopted in this District.

Infectious Diseases during the year.

There have been notified 55 cases of Infectious Diseases, viz :—4 of Diphtheria 10 of Erysipelas, 10 of Enteric Fever, and 31 of Scarlet Fever. Of the above, 9 of the cases of Enteric Fever and 4 of Erysipelas were notified from the Asylum. The remainder, viz. :—4 of Diphtheria, 6 of Erysipelas, and 31 of Scarlet Fever have been notified from Caterham itself.

Twenty-two cases of Scarlet Fever, two cases of Diphtheria and the case of Enteric Fever were removed to the Isolation Hospital. One case of Scarlet Fever and the case of Enteric Fever terminated fatally. The case of Enteric Fever was undoubtedly contracted outside the District, the child on returning from a holiday in Kent being ill with the disease on her return home. In addition to the above by the courtesy of Medical Officers of the Guards' Depot, cases of infectious diseases occurring in the Barracks have been notified to me privately.

During the year the orders of the Local Government Board *re* the notification of Acute Poliomyelitis, Cerebro-Spinal Fever, and Pulmonary Phthisis have been adopted and promulgated.

General Hygienic Proceedings.

The Main Drainage System of the Hill portion of the District continues to

work satisfactorily. A very pure effluent is obtained, and the sewers, beds, ejectors, and works generally are in a most satisfactory condition. The number of gallons treated during the year has been 40,725,000. Dr. S. Rideal, F.I.C., who has analysed the effluent reports that after leaving the circular sprinklers even before treatment on the sand filters that this effluent conforms with the Royal Commission Standards seeing that it contains less than 3 parts per 100,000 of suspended solids and it dissolves oxygen at a less rate than half a part per 100,000 per 24 hours.

The number of Cesspools emptied in the Valley portion of the District during the year has been 909. The contents after being deodorised have been removed in closed vans to the sewage site.

Housing of the Working Classes.

The number of families or separate occupiers in the District is 1667.

Systematic inspection has been made during the year of all property in the District under the Housing, Town Planning, etc., Act, and the following defects have been remedied :—

Drainage Defects and Stoppages	141
Defective W.Cs.	12
Defective Dust Bins	62
Animals, Manure and Offal Nuisance	14
Defective Walls and Roofs	26
Insanitary Dwellings	9
Sundry Sanitary Defects	6
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Total	270

Nine cottages have been closed by order of the Council as being unfit for habitation on account of defective walls, roofs, etc.

One case of overcrowding has been dealt with and remedied.

There is an adequate supply of cottages in the District for the working classes.

House Refuse.

The Council have removed 2895, loads of House Refuse during the year. This is either burnt at the local brickworks or on sites at a distance from inhabited houses.

Private Street Works.

Ten private roads in the District have been made up under the Private Street Works Act 1892, during the year, and four other streets have been dealt with under Section 19 of the Public Health Acts Amendment Act, 1907.

New Buildings.

Plans of 23 new houses or additions to existing buildings have been passed by the Council.

Elementary Schools.

The Elementary Schools have been frequently inspected during the year and concerted action has been taken where necessary with the Medical Officer appointed by the Surrey County Council.

Slaughter Houses.

There are three slaughter houses in use in the district at the present time. Frequent inspection is made but no case of tuberculous meat has been detected. The slaughter houses are kept in a clean and satisfactory condition.

Dairies, Cowsheds, Milkshops, Foods, etc.

There are 8 Cowkeepers and 12 Dairymen and Purveyors of Milk in the District. Examinations prove that the milk, foods and drugs sold in the district are exceptionally good. No prosecutions have been necessary during the year.

The cattle sheds and milkshops comply with the Dairies, Cowsheds, and Milkshops Order as also the Bye-laws of the District.

The Dairies and Cowsheds of the District have been repeatedly visited and are as a rule carefully kept.

Water Supply.

The periodical Water Analyses have been very satisfactory and prove that it maintains its high standard of excellence and purity.

Factory and Workshops Acts, 1901.

During the past year frequent inspections of Bakehouses, Laundries and Workshops have shown that the provisions of this Act have not been infringed. The premises in all cases were found to be suited to the purposes for which they have been used.

S. DAVEY,

Medical Officer of Health for the Urban District of Caterham.